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REVIEWS.

Philosophie des sciences sociales. Tome I; *Objet des sciences sociales.*

Par RENÉ WORMS. Paris: V. Giard & E. Brière, 1903.

Pp. 230.

THIS is the first of three volumes which are designed to set forth a systematic sociology. M. Worms belongs to the ultra-organic school, and his preconceptions are to be traced in the present work, although much of the ingenious analogy of his *Organisme et société* is here recast in less biological terms.

This book is not likely to soothe those who are irritated by methodology and the making of many phrases. There are barely a half-dozen concrete statements and illustrations in the whole volume. The author is fond of antitheses which he synthesizes in a true Hegelian manner. Thus Tarde's imitation and Durkheim's constraint are blended in "concours," described as the larger social fact which includes the others. There is much "elaboration of the obvious," as, for example, when social facts are somewhat ponderously characterized as multiple, complex, distributed in space, and varied in time. The book as a whole lacks system and coherence in substance, in spite of its formal appearance of unity.

Part I deals with "Society," which is defined as a nation politically organized. Moreover, this sufficiently ample unit seems likely still further to expand as a result of the present tendency toward international agreements and the ultimate federation of the world. The discussion of natural growth *vs.* the theory of contract, which closed the first division, adds nothing to Fuillée's treatment of this subject. In the second part, "Elements, Life, and Evolution of Society," M. Worms elaborates the composite group-character of all societies, points out in a rather commonplace way the effect of physical environment on social life, enunciates the characteristics of social facts mentioned above, and then undertakes to classify social phenomena. After rather desultory criticism of De Greef's sevenfold hierarchy of social facts, the author advances a biological scheme which suggests Spencer's three systems of organs, but introduces a variation. Instead of the familiar "sustaining, distributing, and regulating" agencies, Worms asserts

that the functions of nutrition, reproduction, and co-ordination (relation) furnish categories for a proper classification. Into the first of these he reads all economic phenomena ; into the second —“which is singularly amplified in social life”—love, marriage, education, family relations, etc. The third function is made to include moral, religious, intellectual, and æsthetic facts. This whole treatment affords an admirable illustration of the futility of mixing terms and confusing ideas. From all this elaborate analysis emerges an enumeration of social facts which differs only in unessential details from De Greef's hierarchy.

On the other hand, the chapters dealing with “The Correlation of Social Facts” and “The Evolution of Society” bring out clearly and effectively the truth that society is a unity to be studied in many aspects, no one of which dominates the whole, and that social change and progress are far from being interchangeable terms.

Part III treats of “The Social Sciences.” A somewhat trite discussion of science and art is followed by an equally barren attempt to correlate dynamic and static with anatomy and physiology. Then comes a discrimination between descriptive and comparative social sciences, which in turn yields to an enumeration of true social sciences as distinguished from certain pretended sciences. Statistics, ethnology, and history are included in the latter category, the first as an instrument of all sciences, the other two as dealing in a different way with materials already assigned to or appropriated by other sciences.

The final question is as to the character of sociology itself. M. Worms avoids the pitfalls of definiteness and finality with much ingenuity. There can be no single social science except in the same sense that biology includes all the sciences of the organic world. Hence the function of sociology is synthetic ; it unifies the special social sciences. Moreover, it is scientific in its spirit and method, although it lacks phenomena peculiarly its own. Its function, however, is a philosophic one. Perhaps, therefore, it would be best to describe sociology as the philosophy of the social sciences. Thus the volume ends.

On the whole, the book adds little or nothing to existing conceptions or terminology. It serves however, to bring out in bold relief the difference between organizing concrete material and simply making phrases about it.

GEORGE E. VINCENT.